



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TraiNet/VCS Newsletter

April 16, 2008

Volume 5 No. 2

PRODUCED UNDER CONTRACT BY USAID/EGAT/ED

News

Phase-out of TraiNet Desktop by June 30, 2008

USAID is no longer funding the maintenance of TraiNet Desktop. As of June 30, 2008, USAID will no longer fund, and Development InfoStructure (Devis) will no longer provide, Desktop-related Service Desk support. Also as of June 30, 2008, USAID will no longer cover any data migration costs on behalf of USAID Missions or partners. Effective September 30, 2008, current users will no longer have access to TraiNet Desktop and must use TraiNet Web exclusively.

All sites who have active programs in TraiNet Desktop, or who have recently submitted data using TraiNet Desktop have been contacted by the USAID TraiNet/VCS Service Desk. Specific instructions have been given to update and transfer data in preparation for the TraiNet Web migration. TraiNet Operators at these sites should not delay in making the necessary updates and transferring the data as per the instructions provided.

If you have any questions, please contact the Service Desk at jvisa@devis.com.

New TraiNet Web Version, 1.25

TraiNet Web update #25 will be released this week. This release provides enhancements to reports and searches; provides the ability to enter a home address for participants involved in an activity outside their home country; enhances the ability to clone a participant who participates in multiple events; and provides added functionality to the termination and end-of-program statuses.

Here is a list of features:

Reports & Searches

- Mission-defined reports:
 - Will now include date filters.
 - Will now contain the TraiNet Site ID for each record exported to the csv/Excel file format.
 - Will now contain a filter for the mission-defined question(s).
- The Program and Participant searches will now generate faster results.

Home Address Feature

- On the Manage Participant screen for U.S. and Third Country programs, users will now be able to enter a home address.

Hints & Tips

Understanding Budget Differences in TraiNet and VCS: How To Save Extra Work by R2s, R3s and R4s

* **TraiNet and VCS/SEVIS: An Explanation of Program vs. Participant Budgets**

TraiNet and VCS maintain budgets differently. When a U.S. exchange program is created in TraiNet the budget is created for the program. When the Program and its Participants are submitted to the VCS the TraiNet Program budget is divided by the number of planned or active participants in the group to come up with a participant budget. The VCS must divide the TraiNet Program budget by the number of currently planned or active participants in order to come up with a participant budget that SEVIS requires.

* **How Does a Participant End Up in the R2, R3, or R4 Queue?**

When new or updated information for an exchange visitor is submitted to the VCS that exchange visitor's record will show up in the R2, R3, or R4 queue.

* **Remembering Important Updates and Avoiding Unnecessary Updates**

What are the most important TraiNet updates to submit to VCS throughout a program?

- Status changes
- Date changes
- Residence address of the exchange visitor

What updates are not important to submit throughout the program?

- Budget changes: these can wait until the program is marked as completed

* **How Status Updates Can Affect Participant Budgets and R2, R3 and R4 Workload**

Remember that TraiNet stores budgets on a Program level while VCS and SEVIS store budgets on a participant level. When an exchange visitor is canceled from, or added to, a U.S. exchange event, the per participant funding is affected. Consider this example:

- A TraiNet program of 10 participants with a \$100,000 budget.

Clone Participant Feature

- On the single and multiple participant wizard for U.S. and Third Country programs, users will be given the option to clone a previously entered participant. This creates a second record for the participant. Trainet will still look at these participants as separate beings. The following information will be copied forward:
 - Bio Data (not including address)
 - Passport information (for U.S. participants)
 - External ID generated for use in VCS

Termination/End Program Feature

- Termination and End Reasons will now be labeled so users can understand the differences between which reasons are termination reasons and which are end reasons.
- End Program Effective Date will now be required as part of the Terminated/End status information.
- Terminations with a reason of 'Other' will require remarks. These remarks will be transferred to the VCS.

New VCS Version, 2.7

VCS version 2.7 will be released later this week. Enhancements include the following items listed below:

- When a user is logged into the system and inactive for 25 minutes the system will pop up a warning message. If the user stays inactive for an additional 5 minutes they will be logged out.
- Email notifications will be sent to Verifiers and Approvers when dependents of Exchange Visitors are sent to the VCS for the first time. Emails will not be sent for other dependent change requests.
- Termination and End-Program updates have been made to coincide with the TraiNet enhancements mentioned above.
- The *About*, *Contact* and *Site Disclosure* text has been updated.
- If Non-USAID funding is added in TraiNet the Verifier must also enter the amount and source in the VCS. This interface has been enhanced.

Exchange Visitor Compliance and TraiNet Workshops

USAID will continue to sponsor one-day workshops in Washington, DC on J visa compliance, using TraiNet Web and the Visa Compliance System (VCS). Dates are **April 23rd**, **May 12th** and **July 16th**. The workshops are held in the Ronald Reagan Building from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM and are offered at no cost to USAID and partner staff. Contact Chris Kagy at ckagy@devis.com to register.

- When this program is submitted to the VCS the system divides \$100,000 by 10 (the number of planned participants in the program)
- VCS reports a per participant budget amount to SEVIS of \$10,000
- Before the program start date, a participant cancels from this program. The TraiNet Operator must submit that cancellation to the VCS so SEVIS does not expect that participant to arrive in the U.S. with the other 9 participants.
- If this cancellation is submitted to the VCS without changing the TraiNet program budget the other 9 participants will also go to the R2, R3 and R4 queue with budget updates. That is because the TraiNet budget of \$100,000 is now divided by 9 participants, leaving a per participant budget total of \$11,111. The original per participant amount was \$10,000.
- The R2, R3 and R4 are now acting on 10 participants rather than just the one cancellation.
- To avoid this extra work, before submitting the cancellation to the VCS, recalculate the TraiNet program budget so the per participant cost stays the same for the remaining planned or active participants in the group.
 - 9 participants remain. The original per participant funding was \$10,000. Multiply this amount times 9 and the new TraiNet budget gets changed to \$90,000
 - Submit the cancellation to the VCS. Now, only the cancellation gets processed – 1 person as opposed to 10 – because there is no budget update recorded by VCS for the remaining 9.

What are some of the problems that can result from re-verifying, re-approving and re-submitting unnecessary updates?

Re-verification and re-approval of an entire group can cause a delay in the printing of the DS-2019 forms for the remaining planned participants. If a group of participants have not yet been submitted to SEVIS and a new update gets submitted from TraiNet to VCS for all of the participants, they will all need to get re-verified and re-approved. Repeated resubmission of cancellations or additions of participants to a program without adjusting the program budget can also lead to a delay in the start of a program for the remaining participants, or in a worst-case scenario, an outright cancellation of the entire program.

Keeping these important points in mind to ensure your exchange visitors get processed through the USAID visa control systems in a timely manner.

TraiNet/VCS Help Desk

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